

APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

H.B. No. 6439 (COMM) AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE THIRTIETH, 2023, AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR MARCH 10, 2021

TESTIMONY from Tim Sullivan, Superintendent of CREC Schools

Good evening Honorable Chairs, Ranking Members, and distinguished members of the Committee. I am Tim Sullivan, Superintendent of CREC magnet schools. I am here today to ask for your support in funding the CT Teacher Residency Program and bills creating incentives for the recruitment and retention of teachers of color.

Last year, I appeared before you and asked that the committee recommend funding for the CREC Teacher Residency Program. I am now advocating on behalf of what we hope will be a statewide Teacher Residency Program. The growth and development of the program has been awe inspiring. The program is now poised to make a major impact on the ongoing problem of getting Black Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) in front of our children. All that is needed is some well spent dollars to support its growth and expansion.

Last year, we started with 12 residents in our CREC magnet schools. One made a career switch and the other 11 are now teaching students in CREC schools. Over 200 students of all ethnicities are looking up to a professional educator who may be the first educator who reflects their ethnicity. They are seeing the world differently as a result of the small, but significant change of having a BIPOC teacher educating them. Not only will this group of students benefit from that experience, but thousands of future students will have the same life changing experience.

One of the lessons I have learned as a leader of a school district fighting for equity, is that the time for talk is over, it is time for action. You and this group of elected officials have an opportunity to act on funding a program that can have a profound impact on the lives of future generations in Connecticut. You have the chance to alter the path of public education by making a relatively small allocation to the efforts to diversify the workforce and create real change in our classrooms.

You will not recruit or cross endorse your way out of this shortage. If you want teachers of color for our students in Connecticut, you should take this opportunity to act. Your actions will speak volumes to the 1,000's of kids who for the first time in their life will have a teacher that represents the richness and cultural diversity that is Connecticut.

CREC requests an allocation of *\$4.5 million annually to fully fund the Teacher Residency Program to ensure that approximately 60 new teachers of color are hired across Connecticut* to financially support an established and successful program. This funding helps meet the state's MTR goal. CREC, along with the RESC Alliance, is prepared to do our part to contribute to this essential effort. Please allocate funding to this important program to help us better serve the students of Connecticut.

For more information, www.ct-trp.org

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